LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A computer system for allowing negotiation between a plurality of entities, the computer system comprising a computer network having a plurality of computer nodes; a computer node being arranged to define the negotiation between the entities with a set of negotiation activities; wherein the computer node is operable to implement a plurality of negotiation rule sets <u>defining a plurality of market mechanisms</u>, each rule set constraining the set of negotiation activities to a specific negotiation type, thereby allowing an entity to select at least one of a plurality of negotiation types<u>, the selected</u> <u>negotiation rule set being used to validate proposals submitted by participants in the</u> <u>negotiation, the computer node matching compatible proposals in accordance with rules</u> <u>defined in the selected negotiation rule set and forming an agreement.</u>

2. (Original) A computer system according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of nodes are arranged to define the negotiation between the entities with a set of negotiation activities; wherein each of the plurality of nodes are operable to implement a plurality of negotiation rule sets.

3. (Original) A computer system according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the entities is a software negotiation agent.

4. (Original) A computer system according to claim 3, wherein the computer node incorporates the software negotiation agent.

5. (Original) A computer system according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the entities is a user.

6. (Original) A computer system according to claim 1, wherein in at least one of the entities is a negotiation host and at least another of the entities is a negotiation participant.

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7. (Original) A computer system according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the rule sets constrains the negotiation activities to an auction and at least another rule set constrains the negotiation activities to a one on one negotiation.

8. (Original) A computer system according to claim 1, wherein the negotiation activities include a proposal validator for validating a proposal, received from an entity, with an agreement template, a negotiation locale for providing a validated proposal to a proposal compatibility checker for comparing proposals received from the negotiation locale to determine compatibility of received proposals to establish an agreement.

9. (Original) A computer system according to claim 8, wherein the negotiation activities further includes a protocol enforcer for rejecting invalid proposals.

10. (Original) A computer system according to claim 9, wherein the negotiation activities further includes an information editor for providing to the negotiation locale summarized proposal information.

11. (Original) A computer system according to claim 10, wherein the negotiation activities further includes an agreement maker for determining criteria for establishing an agreement based on the received proposals.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer node for coupling to a computer system to allow negotiation between a plurality of entities, the computer node comprising a processor, the processor being arranged to define the negotiation between the entities with a set of negotiation activities; wherein the processor is operable to implement a plurality of negotiation rule sets defining a plurality of market mechanisms, each rule set constraining the set of negotiation activities to a specific negotiation type, thereby allowing an entity to select at least one of a plurality of negotiation types, the selected negotiation rule set being used to validate proposals submitted by participants in the negotiation, the computer node matching compatible proposals in accordance with rules defined in the selected negotiation rule set and forming an agreement.

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13. (Original) A computer node according to claim 12, wherein at least one of the entities is a software negotiation agent.

14. (Original) A computer node according to claim 13, wherein the computer node incorporates the software negotiation agent.

15. (Original) A computer node according to claim 12, wherein at least one of the entities is a user.

16. (Original) A computer node according to claims 12, wherein in at least one of the entities is a negotiation host and at least another of the entities is a negotiation participant.

17. (Original) A computer node according to claims 12, wherein at least one of the rule sets constrains the negotiation activities to an auction and at least another rule set constrains the negotiation activities to a one on one negotiation.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for selecting a negotiation type between a plurality of entities via a computer network having a plurality of computer nodes, the method comprising defining in a computer node a set of negotiation activities; allowing an entity to select via the computer node at least one of a plurality of negotiation rule sets defining a plurality of market mechanisms, each rule set constraining the set of negotiation activities to a specific negotiation type, thereby allowing an entity to select at least one of a plurality of negotiation types, the selected negotiation rule set being used to validate proposals submitted by participants in the negotiation, the computer node matching compatible proposals in accordance with rules defined in the selected negotiation rule set and forming an agreement.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer system for allowing negotiation between a plurality of entities, the computer system comprising a computer network having a plurality of computer nodes; a computer node being arranged to define the negotiation between the entities with a set of negotiation activities; wherein a number of different market mechanisms are definable by different arrangements of negotiation activities, the negotiation activities include a proposal validator for validating a proposal, received from an entity, with an agreement template, a negotiation locale for providing a validated proposal to a proposal

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compatibility checker for comparing proposals received from the negotiation locale to determine compatibility of received proposals to establish an agreement.

20. (Original) A computer system according to claim 19, wherein the negotiation activities further includes a protocol enforcer for rejecting invalid proposals.

21. (Original) A computer system according to claim 20, wherein the negotiation activities further includes an information editor for providing to the negotiation locale summarized proposal information.

22. (Original) A computer system according to claim 21, wherein the negotiation activities further includes an agreement maker for determining criteria for establishing an agreement based on the received proposals.

23. (Currently Amended) A computer node for coupling to a computer system to allow negotiation between a plurality of entities, the computer node comprising a processor, the processor being arranged to define the negotiation between the entities with a set of negotiation activities; wherein <u>a number of different market mechanisms are definable by different arrangements of negotiation activities,</u> the negotiation activities include a proposal validator for validating a proposal, received from an entity, with an agreement template, a negotiation locale for providing a validated proposal to a proposal compatibility checker for comparing proposals received from the negotiation locale to determine compatibility of received proposals to establish an agreement.

24. (Original) A computer node according to claim 23, wherein the negotiation activities further includes a protocol enforcer for rejecting invalid proposals.

25. (Original) A computer node according to claim 24, wherein the negotiation activities further includes an information editor for providing to the negotiation locale summarized proposal information.

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26. (Original) A computer node according to claim 25, wherein the negotiation activities further includes an agreement maker for determining criteria for establishing an agreement based on the received proposals.

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